Konkan Railway Project

794. DR LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the funding system of the Konkan Railway Project,

(b) whether there has been any change in the funding pattern due to the cost over-runs since commencement of the project

(c) if so the details thereof,

(d) whether there has been a huge out-go of foreign exchange in importing the foreign technology and equipment machinery at a later stage, not originally conceived in the project,

(e) if so, the details thereof, and

(f) the effect of the cost over-runs on the "Build Operate Transfer" (BOT) scheme envisaged in this project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) (a) the details of the funding system are as under —

(1) Equity Capital

(2) Sale & Lease-back of Assets

(3) Market Borrowings

(b) Yes, Sir

(c) The equity capital and the equity ratio has been increased An amount of Rs 150 crores is being financed through sale and lease-back of some of the Corporation's assets

(d) No Sir

(e) Does not arise

(f) The cost over run has necessitated a revision of the Debt Equity Ratio and also led to a higher level of borrowings for financing the project However the results show that there will be substantial increase in the level of goods as well as passenger traffic and sufficient operational surpluses would be generated to permit servicing and repayment of the debt obligations

Loss on Metro Railway Project

795 SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state

(a) whether the Metro Railway Project Calcutta has projected a loss of Rs 20 crore for 1996-97 which is double than the figure of the previous year,

(b) if so the reasons therefor and

(c) the measures proposed to overcome this?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) (a) The estimated operational loss (excluding appropriation to pension fund) during 1996-97 is Rs. 1532 lakhs, as against Rs 1072 lakhs during 1995-96.

(b) Increase in the variable cost, expected rise in the consumption of electricity due to the increased area of operation and passenger comfort, general escalation in prices, etc.

(c) By effecting increase in the ridership through promotional measures like feeder bus services, attitudinal change in commuters and by keeping Govt expenditure under control to the extent possible, etc

Ranchi - Lohardaga Line

796 SHRI LALIT ORAON Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state

(a) whether the Government propose to convert Ranchi-Lohardaga metre gauge line of the South-Eastern Railway into broad gauge and extend it upto Tori, and

(b) if so, the time by which the work of conversion of line will be started?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) (a) and (b) The survey for conversion of Ranchi-Lohardaga (69 kms.) narrow gauge line to broad gauge and its extension upto Tori (44 kms.) has been taken up Further consideration of the project would be possible based on the results of the survey and availability of resources in the coming years

Contractors for Gauge Conversion

797 SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been invited to the news-item captioned "CBI unearths Rs 500 Cr scam in gauge conversion" appearing in the *Economic Times* New Delhi dated February 27, 1996

(b) if so the facts of the matter reported therein

(c) the reaction of Government thereto

(d) whether any investigation has been made in this matter and if so, the outcome thereof and

(e) the follow-up action taken or being taken by the Ministry thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) (a) Yes, Sir

(b) The newspaper had reported

(i) Irregularities in award of gauge conversion works on South Central Railway,

(ii) Withholding of permission by MOS(R) for detailed investigation involving a Joint